

Don Valley Local Immigration Partnership Interim Partnership Council (The Council)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Articles:

1. **Background:** As described by Citizenship and Immigration Canada in the contract for this initiative, Local Immigration Partnerships “..(LIPs) will provide a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers to Ontario that are local and regional in scope.” This LIP, with Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office as the lead agency, is focused on the neighbourhoods of Banbury-Don Mills, Thorncliffe Park, Flemingdon Park, Victoria Village, and Parkwoods-Donalda. Any overlap in boundaries with other LIP initiatives will be addressed collaboratively with the LIPs in question.
2. **Purpose:** The purpose of the council is to see the project to completion, achieving all project objectives as identified in the Call for Proposals. In summary, the project objectives are: -
 - To identify groups that will coordinate and enhance local and regional service delivery to newcomers while identifying and minimizing duplication. Strategic partnerships between service providers are to be created.
 - To assist non-settlement service providers and the community in developing a greater understanding of newcomer needs and services.
 - To support program delivery through research and actions.
 - To develop a local settlement strategy.
 - To develop an action plan for the implementation of the local settlement strategy that identifies key tasks, milestones, roles and responsibilities.

The Council subsequently developed a logic model to provide a reference to guide the implementation of the project through to completion. The objectives as laid out in the logic model are: -

- Improve access and coordination of settlement and non-settlement services.
- To have a better understanding about community needs and gaps in service.
- Improve access of newcomers to the labour market.

Note: See item 4 below for clarification of the interim nature of the Partnership Council.

3. **Guiding Principles and Values:** See Appendix 1
4. **Membership:**
Full membership of the council will comprise : -
 - a. The following signatories to the proposal to Citizenship and Immigration Canada
 - Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office
 - Flemingdon Neighbourhood Services
 - Afghan Women’s Organization

- Flemington Community Legal Services
 - Flemington Health Centre
 - Better Living Health and Community Services
 - Don Mills Employment Resource Centre
 - Labour Community Services
 - Davis + Henderson
 - Toronto District School Board
- b. Any organization delivering settlement services within the Don Valley LIP catchment (excepting government agencies such as the City of Toronto as listed above which will have observer status) that signs the Memorandum of Understanding (**Appendix 4**) that commits them to participation in the LIP as outlined in these Terms of Reference. Organizations wishing to or invited to join the Council as full members will be given an orientation package to review, then invited to attend a Council meeting as observer, and subsequently to sign the Memorandum of Understanding. The Council will then approve the additional member at the next Council meeting, at which time the organization will become a full member.¹
 - c. The City of Toronto will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting members of the Council. The City of Toronto will remain a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding and commits to adhere to the Terms of Reference.
 - d. Observer status will apply to any organizations that are not eligible for full membership or choose not to participate as full members.² Observers will be entitled to participate in discussions but not in decision-making.

Note on inclusion strategy/interim council status: -

The overall goal of the initiative is to produce a local settlement strategy and an action plan for implementation that includes the formation of sustainable mechanisms for effective settlement and integration.

The partner agencies recognize that issues of inclusion and representation, both initially and over time, are key elements of an effective, sustainable strategy. The partners will therefore function as an Interim Council (“the Council”) for the development of a sustainable action plan. Part of this process will involve the identification of population groups, agencies, businesses, institutions and other stakeholders that will be included in the planning/coordination of settlement and integration services. In addition, the Council will develop a range of mechanisms for inclusion in the long-term process, including community engagement strategies, sub-committees, ad hoc working groups, Town Hall meetings and other processes that will allow for equitable, effective inclusion.

Part of the LIP project will be to explore these options with the relevant stakeholders as part of the development of the action plan.

¹ At the Council meeting on November 24th, 2009, Woodgreen Community Services and Working Women Community Centre were adopted as full members of the Council, subject to their completion of the memorandum of understanding.

² The Ontario Science Centre has chosen observer status.

5. **Project Management Committee (PMC):** The Council will appoint a Project Management Committee that will work with the Project Co-ordinator and consultants to oversee the implementation of the work plan and priorities as determined by the Council. The Project Management Committee will prepare the agenda for Council meetings.
6. **Staffing:** The project staff comprises: -
 - a. Project Coordinator
 - b. Administrative Assistant
 - c. Consulting team
7. **Frequency/Schedule of Meetings:** To be determined by the Council. A minimum of 8 Council meetings will be held. The Project Management Committee will meet either physically or electronically/virtually prior to Council meetings to prepare the agenda and meet any other requirements to ensure that the project proceeds according to the work plan/logic model.
8. **Chair/Facilitation of meetings:** There will be a rotating chair for Council and Project Management Committee meetings.
9. **Quorum:** – 50% +1 of the full members, such number having to include lead agency representative and at least 1 other member of the PMC.
10. **Decision Making:** Decision-making will be by consensus, and where consensus cannot be reached, by majority vote, subject to quorum. Each full member agency will have one vote. (See item 9 above). Where appropriate, council members in a conflict of interest position will declare this conflict and will have their voting rights suspended for the item under discussion. Where there is disagreement such that consensus cannot be reached, the range of perspectives will be incorporated in the minutes of the meeting to ensure consideration subsequently in development of the action plan.
11. **Conflict of Interest:** See Appendix 2
12. **Conflict Resolution:** See Appendix 3
13. **Minutes:** Minutes will be taken of each Council, Project Management Committee and any other ad hoc committee/working group. Minutes will be taken by the Project Coordinator, administrative assistant or a committee member as designated at the meeting in question. Minutes from the previous meeting will be distributed a minimum of 3 days prior to the subsequent meeting.
14. **Dissolution of Council:** The Council will be dissolved on submission of the Action Plan and completion of all project activities and reporting requirements.
15. **Amendments to Terms of Reference:** These Terms of Reference may be amended at any time by majority vote at a Council meeting with quorum.

APPENDIX 1

DON VALLEY LIP - STATEMENT OF PROJECT PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The Don Valley Local Immigration Partnership believes that: -

- a) The agencies providing services within the Don Valley LIP catchment, and working with newcomers, immigrants and refugees - and newcomers, immigrants and refugees themselves - have unique and essential contributions to the development of seamless and comprehensive service systems.
- b) The diversity of groups and agencies working in the catchment - including large and small agencies, multiservice and single service agencies, and multicultural and ethnospecific agencies and labour bodies - is a strength we want to build on. Respecting our individual contributions, insights and challenges is essential in working together.
- c) Agencies, organizations and emerging groups all have a role in future service planning, coordination and delivery, and we recognize the need to coordinate and collaborate with each other in an effort to serve the best interests of clients.
- d) We all strive to engage honestly in dialogue with other stakeholders. Similarly, we will strive to be transparent in our participation.
- e) We must model anti-racism, anti-oppression, gender equity, and cultural competency principles in our work with each other that guide our work with clients and participants

Principles of a Culturally Competent Settlement Service System

- Client-focused - a system that recognizes that serving the best interests of clients is paramount.
- Inclusiveness - a system where decision-making includes perspectives from diverse points of view.
- Reflecting cultural differences - the process of identifying or recognizing cultural diversity.
- Valuing cultural differences - the process of regarding highly cultural differences within and across cultures.
- Service Equity - the ability to provide accessible and relevant services to the targeted groups.

Key values that Guide us in our Culturally-Based Approach

- We recognize the inherent worth, dignity, and unique assets of each member of a community
- We include attention to the realms of feeling, spirit, and relationships in our work
- We seek to learn in and from every interaction and foster an atmosphere of trust

- Our focus is on interdependence (rather than independence) as the pathway to transformation
- We utilize a holistic, social transformation approach
- We enter into and work with communities based in the cultural perspectives of those communities.³

³ As adapted from West Downtown Toronto Settlement Service Strategy 2008 St Stephen's Community House © 2009
Don Valley LIP Terms of Reference – adopted November 24th, 2009

APPENDIX 2

Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Don Valley Local Immigration Partnership Council

1. Staff and Council members are expected to adhere to the standard adapted from the article “Ethical Guidelines for Board Members of Not-for-Profit Organizations.”⁴
2. Methods to avoid conflict of interest, including situations where direct and indirect gains would be accrued to the member or member organization as a result of actions or decisions made in the capacity of Council or Committee membership. Examples of potential conflict of interest include: -
 - A Council member/member agency makes a decision motivated by considerations other than the “best interests of the community”;
 - A Council member or close family member enters into a contractual agreement with the Don Valley Local Immigration Partnership Council with respect to the current CIC-LIP initiative.
 - Due to Council membership, a member learns of an opportunity for profit which may be valuable to him/her personally or to an organization of which he/she is a member;
 - A Council member assists a third party in their dealings with the organization, where such assistance could result in favourable or preferential treatment being granted the third party; or
 - Due to Council membership, a member receives gifts or loans;
3. Where conflicts are unavoidable, members and observers will disclose any conflict or potential conflict, including:
 - a. Potential for funding for their organization as a result of a decision by the Council.
 - b. Intention to seek funding independently under programs discussed by the Council.
4. All contact with the public, staff, clients and Council peers will be conducted in an ethical, fair and straightforward manner.
5. Committee members will not exercise individual authority of the committee staff or members.
6. Council members will strive to foster positive working relationships with all stakeholders and staff.
7. Council members will maintain confidentiality of committee business as requested.

⁴ Allan Lowe: Ethical Guidelines for Board Members of Not-for-Profit Organizations (www.axi.ca; Association Xpertise Inc; 2008)
Don Valley LIP Terms of Reference – adopted November 24th, 2009

APPENDIX 3 – CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Don Valley LIP Council is committed to creating and maintaining an organizational environment characterized by constructive, productive and supportive working relationships. These are ones that are open to contrasting styles of understanding and acting and different points of view and that recognize that human interactions are complex, often difficult, and that we all can contribute to their success and breakdown.

All persons involved with the Council have an obligation to communicate openly and respectfully with one another and to provide reasons for particular decisions or actions. When disagreements arise, greater understanding by all is needed. The presence of conflict, if dealt with effectively, offers an opportunity for individual and organizational learning including the identification of policies and practices that need to be improved.

Conflict situations should be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity as unresolved conflict can lead to a stressful, and in the worst cases, a poisoned, work environment.

In the event that any person or group is experiencing a work –related conflict or has a complaint about the actions of another person, the following guidelines will apply.

1. Communicate directly with the person or persons whose actions is the cause of the complaint. People should reasonably expect to know if their behaviour or their decision is a problem for another person or group.
2. If the circumstances are such that the person with a complaint is unable or unwilling to communicate directly with the persons or persons whose actions are the cause of their complaint, either for fear of it going badly, or of reprisal, the help of others should be sought in resolving the conflict.
3. Complaints and conflicts that cannot be resolved by those directly involved will be dealt with by the executive director of the lead agency and, if not resolved at this level, or the executive director's actions are the cause of the problem, by the Board. The executive director or the board may seek outside or independent assistance in resolving the conflict.

Communication of the complaint or conflict shall first be made verbally. If this does not lead to a resolution that is satisfactory to the complainant, the nature of the complaint should be communicated in writing to the Executive Director or Chair of the Board. Such communication should be no more than one page and be descriptive in outlining the events that gave rise to the complaint or conflict.

1. Persons involved in helping resolve the conflict can play a facilitation or mediation role where the goal is to help the parties restore a positive working relationship in the future, or a decision-making /arbitration role where they investigate what happened and make a determination of who is responsible for the situation and what the consequences for the parties should be. The choice of these two approaches should be offered to the parties. If a mediated approach fails to resolve the matter, an arbitrated approach can be undertaken.

2. The parties will refrain from drawing others into the process as a way of garnering support or getting attention. This can escalate the problem and can be damaging to the organization.
3. Complaints and conflicts shall be dealt with in a confidential manner. Meetings to resolve a complaint shall be open only to the parties and those attempting to resolve the complaint. The parties may have an advocate or supporter present. Meetings may be with the parties individually, together or both. In the interest of openness, no minutes or written record of what is said in these meetings shall be recorded although, if the parties agree, the outcome of the meetings or a resulting agreement may be documented.¹
4. Where the board is involved in a conflict resolution role, communication with it should be directly with the Chair not with the whole board. It is the chair's duty to inform the entire board of the existence of the conflict but a committee of the board may be struck in order to help resolve the matter.
5. The parties, and those helping to resolve the conflict, should avoid communicating the details of a complaint, making or responding to allegations or giving advice by e-mail. Face-to-face communication, as difficult as it is, should be relied upon. E-mail messages can be used for arranging meeting meetings or communicating details of the resolution process.

It should also be noted that:

6. The Executive Director or Chair of the Board have an obligation to act immediately in addressing a complaint if the physical and mental health and safety of any of the parties is perceived to be at risk. In doing so one of the parties may be granted a temporary leave of absence with pay until the issue has been satisfactorily resolved or up to two weeks, whichever ever is shorter.
7. If threats to persons are made, or the Executive Director or Chair of the Board perceives a possible danger to a party or to other employees, including the possibility of one party being a danger to themselves, external professional assistance must be sought immediately.

APPENDIX 4 Memorandum of Understanding

Agency Name: _____

Mandate (as it relates to settlement and integration services):

Contact person and alternate:

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Fax: _____

Website: _____

As a member of the Don Valley Local Immigration Partnership Interim Council (the Council) _____ agrees to abide by the terms of reference, including the conflict of interest guidelines, committing to work consistently within those parameters and the stated values and principles towards achieving the primary project goal within the appropriate timelines, this being *“A coordinated, comprehensive and strategic approach to immigration and integration, tailored to the needs of the target communities.”*

We commit, within our organizational capacities, to: -

1. Participate in Council, Project Management Committee and other meetings and processes related to the LIP initiative as requested.
2. Maximize consistency of attendance (both frequency and continuity of representation) at all related meetings.
3. Host Council meetings as agreed with the membership.

4. Assist in linking the project coordinator, consultants and other project team members with program participants, clients and community members, for individual interviews and focus groups.
5. Allow such interviews and focus groups to happen without agency staff or volunteers present, in order to maximize the opportunity for participants to give candid feedback about access to and nature of relevant services.
6. Assist the Council and project team in identifying service gaps and identifying and accessing priority population groups and geographic areas.
7. Explore within our organizations such models and strategies as the partnership identifies as options for a viable local immigration partnership, and provide feedback as requested.
8. Respond to requests to review draft materials or to provide information within timelines agreed by the Council.
9. Promote LIP events, information and opportunities as widely as is feasible, and in such a time frame as to ensure sufficient notice.
10. Participate in the development of the action plan.

This agreement will be in effect for the duration of the project from the date of signing to July 31st, 2010

Agency: _____

Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____
